

## Casella Zero-Sort Facility Tour

Representatives from the Town of Dedham had an opportunity recently to tour Casella's Zero-Sort Recycling facility in Charlestown, MA. Dedham's recycling is hauled from the Town by Russell Disposal to Casella's facility where it is sorted by product type, bailed, and then shipped to be remanufactured into recycled glass, tin cans, paper, and even clothing. This facility was built in 2008 and is the largest in New England and 5<sup>th</sup> largest in the country. The facility processes almost 50 tons of recycling an hour! Casella is committed to recycling as many materials as possible in order to conserve and sustain our environment's limited resources.

In Massachusetts in 2010, cardboard and paper products made up only 26% of solid waste disposal, when you consider that 70% of your household waste is recyclable these figures demonstrate that we need to do a better job of making sure recyclable items do not end up in the landfill. When considering whether or not an item can be recycled look for the recycle symbol. The Town of Dedham accepts numbers 1-7, with the exception of Styrofoam. As a general rule for whether or not paper products are recyclable remember "if you can rip it, you can recycle it". This applies to all paper, paper plates, cups, tissue boxes, toilet paper rolls, food boxes, paper bags, etc. According to the American Forest and Paper Association in 2010 the amount of paper recovered for recycling averaged 334 pounds for each man, woman and child in the United States. Every ton of paper recycled saves more than 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space. You can choose to save even more paper by blocking phone books and unwanted junk mail from reaching your mail box by using a free online service such as [cataloguechoice.org](http://cataloguechoice.org) to stop delivery. By stopping delivery of junk mail you are saving timber and water resources used to make paper, energy used in the production and printing of the mailing and greenhouse gases emitted during the delivery.

It is also important to recycle glass since it is **100 percent** recyclable. Glass is one of the few materials that can be recycled infinitely without losing strength, purity or quality. According to the U.S. EPA 3.0 million tons of glasses were recovered for recycling in 2009.

Since the inception of Single Stream Recycling in 2009, Dedham's recycling rate has more than doubled. In 2011 it rose to 28%. The town is committed to seeing this rate increase even further, but we need your help! We hope the tips listed below will provide further insight into what is and is not recyclable.

In addition to hazardous materials **DO NOT** recycle the following curbside:



• **Cassette & VHS tapes** - Old VHS tapes and CDs are not recyclable through curbside recycling. Currently, Best Buy accepts used VHS tapes and CDs for recycling. Casella will not accept VHS tapes since the tape will unravel and wrap around the machinery, causing it to break.



- **Plastic bags** - Do not put recyclables in plastic bags, place them loose in your bin. Plastic bags are not recyclable curbside since they end up getting stuck in the machinery and will cause it to break. Please recycle your plastic bags at your local supermarket.



- **Styrofoam** - Styrofoam is not recyclable curbside in the Town of Dedham since the facility we take our recyclables to cannot process it. Try to avoid purchasing products with Styrofoam, such as cups, coolers and opt for other packaging instead of Styrofoam peanuts at packaging stores.

In addition to plastic, paper, cardboard, aluminum and glass we learned that you **CAN** recycle the following curbside:



- **Straws** - Straws are recyclable; they end up getting shredded and repurposed.



- **Bottle Caps** - Keep bottle caps on water bottles and other plastics with lids when recycling them and empty out the contents prior to recycling.



- **Shredded Paper** – Place shredded paper in a paper bag or a clear plastic bag so that the workers at the facility know what is inside and to rip it open to recycle the contents.

- **Rinsing your Recyclables** - Remember to rinse your containers, but don't worry about it being perfectly clean the facility is equipped to flush out any remaining residue.

If you are interested in touring Casella's Zero-Sort facility, please contact Virginia LeClair, Environmental Coordinator for the Town of Dedham at [vleclair@dedham-ma.gov](mailto:vleclair@dedham-ma.gov) or 781-751-9213. For additional information on recycling visit the Town's website at [www.dedham-ma.gov/environment](http://www.dedham-ma.gov/environment).